

# **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)**

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (Public Health) is asking for your assistance to prepare for and help slow the spread of the novel (new) coronavirus in Los Angeles County, known as COVID-19. We realize that residents may be stressed due to the vast media coverage. Therefore, we are providing you with some essential details to keep you informed.

## **What is novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Many of them infect animals, but some coronaviruses from animals can change into a new human virus that can spread from person-to-person, which is what happened with the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

## **How is COVID-19 spread?**

COVID-19 is likely to spread in the same way as other respiratory illnesses like flu. It is thought to spread from an infected person who has symptoms to others by:

- Droplets produced through coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as caring for an infected person
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands

## **What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild symptoms to people becoming severely ill and needing hospitalization or dying. Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Severe illness

## **What can I do to protect myself and others from COVID-19?**

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limit close contact, like kissing and sharing cups or utensils, with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your sleeve. Throw used tissues in the trash can, and immediately wash hands with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

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## Is there a vaccine or treatment?

Currently, there is no vaccine available and no specific antiviral treatment recommended. People infected with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. This is an emerging, and rapidly evolving situation, and the CDC and the LA County Department of Public Health (DPH) will continue to provide updated information as it becomes available. The CDC and DPH works 24-7 to protect people's health.

## Can I get tested for COVID-19?

Testing is not helpful if you do not have symptoms. If you have symptoms or if you have questions, please call your medical provider.

## What should I do if I think I have COVID-19 symptoms?

Immediately contact your facility or regular health care provider for an evaluation and for guidance.

## What about visits from my friends and family?

Visitation from family and friends is important to your well-being. However, because visitors can introduce COVID-19 into the facility, and your health is important to us, the facility may limit visitors to prevent the spread of the virus.

Ask to set-up alternative methods of visitation, such as through telephone or videoconferencing.

## What about group activities at my facility?

Public Health has asked facilities to minimize group living activities and outside programming, such as community eating or gatherings. Please contact your facility manager for more information.

## What if I am stressed about COVID-19?

When you hear, read, or watch news about an outbreak of an infectious disease, it is normal to feel anxious and show signs of stress. It is important to care for your own physical and mental health. For help, call the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Access Center 24/7 Helpline at (800) 854-7771 or call 2-1-1.

## What is my facility doing to protect me?

Talk to your facility manager about ways that they are working to keep you safe, and healthy.

## Know where to get reliable information

Beware of scams, false news and hoaxes surrounding novel coronavirus. Accurate information, including announcements of new cases in LA County, will always be distributed by Public Health. The website has more information on COVID-19 including a guide to coping with stress.

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
  - <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>
  - Social media: @lapublichealth
- The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Access Center 24/7 Helpline
- (800) 854-7771.
- Call 2-1-1